

**HAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
December 19, 2005 – 7:00 PM**

PRESENT: Jim Workman, Chairman
Cliff Pratt, Vice-Chairman
Rick Griffin
Ben Moore
Virginia Bridle-Russell
James S. Barrington, Town Manager
Maureen Duffy, Administrative Assistant

REGRETS:

Chairman Jim Workman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and introduced those in attendance.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG – Mark Gearreald led the audience in the salute to the flag.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Mr. Pratt wished the people of Hampton a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mr. Moore wished Hampton citizens a happy holiday and a safe, prosperous new year.

Chairman Workman announced that the next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held on January 2 (December 26, meeting has been cancelled).

1 – HOLIDAY HOUSE & BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr. Griffin announced the homes that received honorable mention for the houses along Mary Bachelder Road, Raymond Lane, M Street and Taylor River Estates. Mr. Griffin mentioned that tonight Dyana Martin is providing tours of the homes and businesses that participated in the competition. The plaques were unavailable for the presentation. They will be delivered tomorrow to the winners.

Mr. Griffin presented the 2005 Holiday House Light award winners to Judy and Peter Curtis. The Business Holiday Light award winners were the Kentville Hotel. The winners thanked the Board of Selectmen and the Recreation Department Director, Dyana Martin.

II. APPOINTMENTS

1 – MARY-LOUISE WOOLSEY – 2006 OPERATING BUDGET

Mrs. Woolsey addressed the Board of Selectmen. She has been watching the Selectmen's meetings on Channel 22 and reading articles in the local newspaper. Mrs. Woolsey said that she found some of the discussion by the Board of Selectmen and Town Manager offensive.

She said that in the past there have been warrant articles written in attempt to abolish the Budget Committee and that voters have continued to support it.

At the April meeting Mrs. Woolsey told the Committee she was thinking in terms of level spending. She also requested that Town Department Heads to consider the same when developing their budget.

Mrs. Woolsey said that Budget Committee meetings are an excellent opportunity for Department Heads to showcase their budget proposal. In addition, she said that it was a good method of educating Committee members and the general public in regards to how much money is needed to operate the Town.

Mrs. Woolsey said that she considers national and international market trends when making financial decisions. She said that there are many published economic predictions, forecasting an increase in unemployment and devaluation in the housing market.

Mrs. Woolsey mentioned that people are not making as much money in comparison to the cost of living.

Mrs. Woolsey thanked Mrs. Bridle-Russell for her position in regards to providing accommodating hours of operation at the transfer station.

Mrs. Woolsey provided the Board of Selectmen with an overview of Hampton's operating budget from 1996 to 2006. In 1996 the operating budget was \$13,907,822. In 1997 the SB2 started. In 2004 and 2005 the default budget was adopted.

The Town of Hampton was founded in 1638. In 1996, 358 years later the annual budget was \$13,907,822. Within 10 years the annual budget has almost doubled to \$23,552,795.

Mrs. Woolsey is very passionate about the Budget Committee. She would like to encourage the Board and the Committee to work together to resolve their differences.

Board of Selectmen Response to Mary-Louise Woolsey

Mr. Moore commented that the Board worked towards a level budget but the cost of utilities prevented them from doing so. He said he would appreciate the Budget Committee's guidance in regards to what should be cut or eliminated from the proposed budget. Mrs. Woolsey said that the Committee is developing the operating budget blindly because they have not seen the petitioned articles which are due on January 10. Possible purchases are still unknown. She will talk with the Budget Committee after the public hearing on January 12 and ask what high points they wish to bring to the BOS attention.

Mr. Griffin said that he believes that the Board of Selectmen is working hard to keep the tax rate as low as possible. He also mentioned that he has been supportive of providing accommodating hours at the transfer station as well.

Mrs. Bridle-Russell said that she resented the last Budget Committee meeting. She wishes that at the second meeting the Committee could have been upfront about wanting to cut \$756,000 from the proposed budget. She also said that many of the members of the Budget Committee disregarded the Department Heads' comments.

Mrs. Bridle-Russell is very active in the community and she is disappointed that she rarely hears concerns from Hampton residents. She said that the Board of Selectmen need to hear more from the residents. In addition, people need to come out and vote. Mrs. Bridle-Russell believes that the Board of Selectmen are working very hard.

Mrs. Bridle-Russell is concerned about the number of staff leaving the Town of Hampton to pursue other employment. She is also concerned about the work environment.

Mrs. Woolsey said that the Budget Committee did not cut money from the budget. It was an adjustment to the proposed figure. She also said that employees are starting to leave because they are getting older. Mrs. Woolsey said that younger staff can then be hired at a reduced salary.

2- VIC LESSARD – BUDGET, WASTE COLLECTION, INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Lessard is apprehensive about the Town considering outsourcing trash collection. His main concern is eliminating six positions from Public Works. These six people are also responsible for snow removal and he questioned who would then do the job. Mr. Barrington said that some of the snow removal is currently contracted out.

Mr. Lessard believes that the Town has been too good with providing services. He feels that cottages at the beach do not require trash collection every day and that three times a week is plenty.

Mr. Lessard suggested that if senior citizens cannot afford to pay for their dog license that the Town should provide it to them free of charge.

He also shares the same concerns as Mrs. Bridle-Russell in regards to personnel leaving the Town of Hampton for other opportunities. Mr. Lessard said that the Town is losing a lot of experienced people but there are also good people taking their place.

Mr. Lessard commented on the infrastructure project at the beach. He is concerned about sidewalks not being included in the price of the highway construction in the island area. In addition he is concerned that the project will require more money to complete the job. Mr. Barrington assured him that the Town will not be seeking additional funds.

Mr. Lessard suggested that a secretary be hired to manage ambulance bills. The salary for this person could come from the money that is collected from health insurance companies.

III. OLD BUSINESS

1. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

SAU 21 Superintendent Jim Gaylord reported to Mr. Barrington last week that the Winnacunnet High School Board was agreeable to hosting a biennial Candidates Night at the Winnacunnet High School auditorium. He also noted that there is \$45,000 in the 2006 Hampton School budget and \$55,000 in the 2006 Winnacunnet budget for the school resource officers. On another subject, he also mentioned that there has been a visual traffic count conducted on Winnacunnet at Park as well. Mr. Barrington has not yet received any update from Steve Pernaw.

On the request for the trench cut on Patricia Lane, Public Works Director John Hangen reported that the Town's overlay work was done in 2003, creating a moratorium on trench cuts until 2008.

Mr. Barrington discussed with Mr. Hangen about paving in the Island area. Because of the work being done there by both Zoppo and Northern Utilities, it is unlikely that the streets will be paved during the winter. They are due for a complete overlay as a part of the project.

This is a busy time of year for all of us in preparation for the Town Meeting. Staff are preparing for the annual audit and a software conversion for the Town's accounting systems. Department Heads are still working on budget proposals and refining numbers and language for warrant articles.

Mr. Barrington reminded the Board that the Town office will be closed from noon to 1:30 tomorrow for the staff Christmas party.

Mr. Barrington spoke with Exeter Town Manager Russ Dean this afternoon about whether he had heard anything new on the court. Mr. Dean told him that Senator Maggie Hassan had reported that she and Senator Martha Fuller Clark had recently met with Commissioner Don Hill. It is Russ Dean's understanding that the local committee of communities is being proposed for organization now and that we should all be hearing something about it within the next week or two. Mr. Barrington also talked to State Representative Mike O'Neil who promised to look into details next week when he's in Concord.

John Hangen had provided the Board with the revised 2006 Hampton Transfer Station fees.

The two bids for the new ambulance have been opened. The two prices are \$123,000 and \$128,363. The Fire Department is currently reviewing the bids and will make a decision in the near future.

Mr. Barrington announced that the PTA Candidates night will be held on March 7. The event will be broadcast by Channel 22.

Selectmen's Response to the Manager's Report

Mr. Moore asked about the Hampton Transfer Station fee changes. Mr. Barrington said that the cost of disposing Freon appliances (i.e. fridges and freezers) has increased from \$7.50 to \$10. This increase is due to the rising costs of handling the substance.

Mr. Barrington mentioned that a warrant article should be developed to address the idea of charging a fee for the transfer station sticker.

2 – DEFAULT BUDGET

The proposed \$23,609,157 default budget will go on the warrant articles for the 2006 Town meeting. The official budget form will then go to the State.

Mr. Moore asked for clarification in regards to the insurance figure. Mr. Barrington explained that the default budget does not include the four additional firefighters.

Mr. Pratt MOTIONED to approve the presented proposed default budget. **Mrs. Bridle-Russell SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

3 – BUDGET

A new budget is in draft form and is still being developed.

4 – WARRANT ARTICLES

Article 8 – *“....raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special or individual warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth in the budget posted with the warrant, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$23,552,795?....”*

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to not recommend the presented Article 8. **Mr. Pratt SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Article 11 – *“...raise \$150,400 and appropriate \$752,000 to fund the 20% local share of, and to accept an 80% share from a CMAQ grant for all costs of procurement, engineering, design, and construction work associated with a bike path project...”*

Federal funding through Department of Transportation (DOT) is available to communities participating in the interstate bike path project. Mr. Barrington is still waiting to hear from DOT to see if the Town will qualify.

Mrs. Bridle-Russell asked why the Town would consider funding a bike path in a year that there have been many cuts to the budget. Mr. Barrington said that if approved the federal funds would cover the majority of the expenses for the bike path and the paving of Exeter Road from the Exeter Town line to Interstate 95.

It was the general consensus of the Board to wait until the DOT reports back.

Article 14 – *“....raise and appropriate the sum of \$125,000 to rebuild the tennis courts and basketball courts at Tuck Field...”*

Mr. Barrington said that the Recreation Director, Dyana Martin told him that the \$125,000 for the courts is accurate.

Article 16 – *“.....raise and appropriate \$80,000 for engineering and related professional services to design and prepare design documents and cost estimates for the connection and extension of sewer along Towle Farm Road.....”*

Town Attorney Gearreald suggested that the wording be altered. Instead of saying “to the structures” he recommended, “provide sewer service to the property line”.

Article 17 – *“.....raise and appropriate **\$30,000** to make repairs to the Lane Memorial Library?.....”*

Mr. Barrington is still waiting for a figure from Library Director Cathrine Redden.

Article 20 – *“.....raise and appropriate \$3,500 to pay to the Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce to help defray the expenses of the 2006 Children’s Christmas Parade....”*

The Hampton Christmas Parade will be sponsored by the Board of Selectmen.

Article 22 – *“.....rescind the provisions of RSA 31:95-c as to the Hampton Emergency Medical Services Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 15 of the 2000 Town Meeting and funded with revenues generated from ambulance and emergency medical services calls, and transfer any surplus remaining in said Fund into, and vote to establish an Ambulance Service Revolving fund*

The article was suggested by the Chairman of the Budget Committee.

It was asked if the article could be more attractive to the voter.

The Board will consider the article again next week.

Article 23 – *“.....appropriate only the sum of \$350,000 from the Hampton Recreation Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 19 of the 2000 Town Meeting and funded with revenues generated from recreation department programs and activities....”*

Need to consider RSA 35B before making a decision on this article.

Article 24 – *“.....raise and appropriate \$350,000 to make improvements on Academy Avenue, Brown Avenue, Carlson Road....”*

A list of streets has been provided by the Public Works Director, John Hangen.

Article 25 – *“.....rescind the provisions of RSA 31:95-c as to the Hampton Private Detail Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 17 of the 2000 Town Meeting and funded with revenues generated from Police and Fire Department private details, and transfer any surplus remaining in said fund to, and vote to establish, a Hampton Private Detail Revolving Fund....”*

The article deals with changing the fund from a special to a revolving fund. If this article fails then Article 27 will offer voters the opportunity to appropriate money for police cruisers.

Article 27 – *“....In the event that Article 25 does not pass, shall the Town of Hampton appropriate only the sum of \$127,724 from surplus revenues generated from the Hampton Private Detail Fund prior to December 31, 2005, to pay for the purchase and “set up” of 4 new marked police cruisers*

If Article 25 passes then Article 27 is not necessary.

Article 26 - *“.....rescind the provisions of RSA 31:95-c as to the Fire Alarm Fund, a Special Revenue Fund.....”*

The Board may consider having the fire department getting out of the fire alarm business. There are many companies that offer the service for a fee.

Article 28 – *“.....appropriate only the sum of \$70,000 from revenues generated from the Hampton Cable TV Local Origination Fund, a Special Revenue Fund”*

Mr. Barrington will confirm the amount.

Article 29 – *“.....appropriate only the sum of \$25,552 (Amount determined at end of fiscal year) generated from the sale of town-owned cemetery lots, to the Cemetery Burial Trust Fund....”*

Article 29 is an annual article that transfers money to the Town cemetery.

Article A – *“.....raise and appropriate \$3,900,000 for the construction of fire station sub-station at the beach and headquarters facilities uptown,....”*

Article A1 - *“.....raise and appropriate \$1,773,880 for the construction of fire department headquarters facilities uptown,.....”*

In the event that Article A fails it considers building the headquarters first and then the substation.

Attorney Geareald suggested changing the wording for Article A and A1.

Article A2 – *“.....raise and appropriate \$250,000 for the purpose of renovating the old district courthouse and relocating it to the east to become part of the fire department headquarters.....”*

There may be some extra cost renovating the old Court house for the fire station.

The Precinct Commissioners will be informed of the plans before moving forward with these articles.

Article B – *“....to appropriate only \$ fill in the blank from the 20% of gross parking lots funds allocated to the Hampton Beach Village District....”*

The exact figure will be available at the end of the year.

Article C – *“To raise and appropriate \$89,000 to pave and re-stripe the Ashworth and High Street parking lots.”*

Mr. Pratt MOTIONED to recommend the presented Article C. **Mr. Moore SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Article D – *“....raise and appropriate \$36,700 to fund the operations of the Police Department Mounted Patrol Unit?...”*

Mr. Pratt MOTIONED to recommend the presented Article D. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

**VOTE: 4 FOR
1 OPPOSED(Griffin)**

Article E – *“.....authorize the Selectmen to enter into a long-term lease/purchase agreement in the amount of \$588,000 payable over a term of sixty months at a rate of \$10,000 per month to purchase an aerial ladder truck for the Hampton Fire Department....”*

Mr. Barrington clarified Article E, noting that the amounts still need adjustment.

Article F – “.....approve the closure of the spur off of Park Avenue onto Winnacunnet Road in order to make a safe intersection at the new entrance to Winnacunnet High School?

Mr. Barrington is still working on the wording for the article.

Article G – “.....vote to keep the fire rescue boat and stay in the marine rescue service?”

It was suggested that the wording be changed. Rather than “to stay in the marine rescue service” the wording will be changed to “so as to be able to provide”. The word “keep” will be replaced by “retain”

Article H – “....vote to support continuation of the School Resource Officer Program?

Mrs. Bridle-Russell said that it is a school issue as they are funding the special officer.

Article H was withdrawn.

Article I – “.....raise and appropriate \$1,415,000 for the purpose of making needed upgrades, repairs, and maintenance at the Town’s wastewater treatment plant?

The lab requires improvements. A question remained open on the detail for the amount being requested.

Article J – “...vote to abandon the fire alarm system.....”

Article J was withdrawn.

Article K – “.....raise and appropriate \$131,000 to fund the cost difference to retain the trash collection services in-house rather than contract these services to an outside contractor?

Mrs. Bridle-Russell mentioned that outsourcing trash collection is a Board of Selectmen decision. Mr. Moore requested copies of the bid proposals. Consensus was to delete Article K. Mr. Workman asked if Mr. Hangen could include the cost of snow removal if the six trash collector positions were eliminated.

Old Business Continued

Mr. Griffin inquired about the vibrations caused by construction along Boston Avenue. Mr. Barrington said that Northern Utilities is doing some construction work in that area. People who are having issues with ground vibrations in their neighborhood are to contact the Town Manager’s office to report any damage or concerns. These claims will then be reported to Zoppo.

Mr. Moore announced that last Friday an impasse has been declared in the Fire Union negotiations. A press release, was distributed to local news papers.

Mr. Pratt suggested that the Town Manager prepare articles that address a \$10 fee for beach parking and transfer station.

Mr. Pratt MOTIONED that articles be developed to charge a fee for beach parking and transfer stickers. **Mr. Moore SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1 TRENCH PERMIT REQUEST

In order for the water to be hooked up to 10 Patricia Street, a portion of the street would have to be dug up. Since the street was paved in 2003 the 5 year moratorium would preclude a cut before 2008 unless the Selectmen give approval.

Mr. Moore asked if there are any other alternatives that could be considered.

Mrs. Bridle-Russell suggested that water hookup be added to the Building Inspector's checklist to prevent this situation from happening again.

2- EXTENTION OF SRF

Mr. Pratt MOTIONED to sign the Modification No. 1 to the Original Loan Agreement from the Department of Environmental Services for the SRF Project to extend the date of Substantial completion to October 1, 2006 . **Mr. Moore SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

V. MINUTES – DECEMBER 12, 2005

Page 6 - Fremont – is spelt with one "e"

Mr. Pratt MOTIONED to accept the minutes as amended. **Mr. Moore SECONDED.**

VOTE: 4 FOR

(Mr. Griffin was out of the room during the time of the vote)

VI - CONSENT AGENDA

None

VII - PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Serpis feels that the Town should not be responsible for commercial trash pick up. He asked the Board if he should write a petition. Mr. Workman said that the Public Works Director John Hangen will be providing the Board with some alternatives in ways for the Town to save money and jobs.

Mr. Moore asked if the Board should put forward an article to eliminate commercial pick-up. Mr. Barrington said that he will consult with the Town Attorney. Mr. Serpis will contact the office later in the week.

Fred Rice addressed the Board of Selectmen. He has been researching the cost of moving the Courthouse. From his findings he believes that it would cost approximately \$25,000 to \$30,000. He also mentioned that the property where the Courthouse and former Town Hall are situated is valuable property.

Mr. Rice said that he is in support of a bag and tag system for residential properties.

Mr. Rice commented on the Budget Committee. He said that it function of the Committee is to prepare an operating budget.

The Budget Committee is not required to deal with the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Mr. Rice said that it was not appropriate for the Committee to discuss warrant articles or special revenue funds.

Mr. Rice discussed the many positive newspaper articles outlining the economic strengths of Hampton and New Hampshire.

The notion of attracting young working people to Hampton would be a feasible idea rather than supporting a strictly elderly population on fixed incomes.

Mr. Rice said that when developing a budget all the needs have to be calculated into the budget. In an emergency or a snow storm money needs to be spent to resolve the problem.

The Budget Committee had chosen to use the same budget amount as last year. Mr. Rice said that it was unfair and insulting to the Board of Selectmen and the Department Heads who had worked hard to develop a budget. As a result the Department Heads are needed to spend their time recreating the budget.

Mr. Rice said that Hampton has a reasonable tax rate in comparison to other towns in the State. In addition Hampton provides a number of services that other towns do not. He also said that the School Board should be subject to the same scrutiny as the Board of Selectmen receives in regards to the Town's operating budget.

He encouraged citizens to become well informed about the issues and to vote.

Mr. Griffin suggested that commercial trash collection needs to be clarified. That is when discussing commercial is Public Works referring to dumpsters – needs clarification

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pratt MOTIONED to adjourn the meeting at 10:13 PM. Mr. Moore **SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Chairman